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SYNTHESIZING CRITICAL THINKING, THEORY, CREATIVITY AND PROCESS IN A DESIGN STUDIO: IS THERE A NEED FOR A NEW COMPUTER, LEARNING TOOL FOR INTERIOR DESIGN?

Presentation by
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Purpose and Issue

Design students may be obtaining a broad range of knowledge in their university experience, but there needs to be a more explicit integration of their growing knowledge base with a systematic method of thinking, understanding, exploring and applying in the interior design studio. Thus, the design studio provides a venue and an instructional technology tool provides the means of integrating these activities. The purpose of this presentation is threefold. First, to lay the foundation for this hypothesis and provide guidance for developing an instructional tool, a brief overview of interior design trends, systems thinking and design process paradigms are outlined. From this investigation a list of objectives for a proposed computer tool is presented. Second, examples of instructional technology and business information systems pertinent to the design studio tool are discussed. The third purpose is to discuss how these computer tools could be translated to the interior design education setting. The issues to explore are 1) is there a need for a new computer, learning program for the interior design environment, and 2) what might be the hurdles to overcome or the points to address in development?

Process

The development of this idea commenced with the belief that the traditional design studio needs assistance—to reinforce process, systems thinking, knowledge retention and acquisition and understanding of terms. Investigating what the interior design profession sees as future trends in the profession tested this hypothesis. With this premise confirmed objectives for the new computer-learning tool were developed. Based on these objectives, research began into existing instructional technology and business information systems for their bearing on the interior design model. What *attributes* from existing examples could be translated, altered and/or combined into something specific to interior design? This presentation outlines some interior design applications and invites audience members to discuss other examples for further development of the model.

Summary

Existing instructional technology and business information systems provide insightful examples from which to build, combine, and tailor to the interior design studio model. For presentation and discussion purposes a preliminary prototype is diagrammed, which includes attributes of existing computer models. The prototype strives for a user-friendly interface, information for both deep and shallow knowledge of a particular area of study, a focus on design process stages, and multiple types of media and links for the learner. This prototype/diagram provides a means for audience discussion.

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